

TWO-AND-TWO MAKE FOUR CASTS.

(With acknowledgments to the recent exploits of Sir Gilbert Parker, M.P., in the field of political ratiocination.)

SIR NORMAN LOCKYER, interviewed on his return from Palma, where he had been keeping the eclipse of the Sun under the severest surveillance, predicted that no other total eclipse of the Sun would occur until 1927. In the meantime, watchers of the skies might occasionally be gladdened by the apparition of meteors and other minor, but not unpleasing, celestial phenomena.

It was a good thing not to have an eclipse of the Sun too often, as constant repetition would be likely to depreciate the value of such an event, and turn day into night too frequently.

Mr. H. A. JONES, interviewed on the eve of his departure for America to produce a new play, predicted that Sir HENRY IRVING would still be at the head of the English stage next year, even although he should retire from active work. He freely admitted that better plays had been written than were now being produced, but a better time was coming. He thought it a very good thing that the music halls had short plays, as it took the mind for a few minutes from the banalities of the comic singer and fostered a love for the theatre.

He anticipated that Mr. PINERO and Mr. G. B. SHAW would never write a play together, but he had every confidence in Mr. G. R. SIMS again finding a collaborator.

Mr. C. K. SHORTER, interviewed on the eve of his departure for Naishápúr in connexion with a special Omar Khayyám supplement of the Woodbridge *Flageolet* (with which is incorporated the *Sphere*), predicted confidently that the new novel *Carniola*, by Mr. THED. WATTS-DUNTON, poet, critic and dedicatee, would be reviewed in all the principal papers. It was not, as some foolish person had assumed from a hasty glance at the title, anti-vegetarian in trend. On the contrary Mr. WATTS-DUNTON was a strong believer in a simple diet of lentils and split pease at any price.

Rumours to the effect that GUSY SMITH was the hero of *Carniola* were unfounded, but the book had a strong Romany interest, and a special edition for caravan consumption was in preparation.

Turning to other matters, the modern CATO remarked that he anticipated a great future for several authors, but would prefer not to name them just yet. There was no doubt that Mr. GEORGE MEREDITH, O.M., would remain at the head of the literary profession.

Mr. ARTHUR PRIESTLEY, M.P., interviewed on the eve of his departure with a team of amateur cricketers to tour in



SWISS NOTES FROM MR. PUNCH'S SKETCH-BOOK.

the Solomon Islands and the Southern Pacific, predicted that next season would see some very interesting games. The county championship, he said, would probably be won by either Yorkshire or Lancashire, Surrey or Sussex, Kent or Essex, or possibly by another team.

Sussex, he freely admitted, would be stronger with Mr. C. B. FRY than without him. He thought it a very good thing that Mr. FRY should be beaten by the bowling now and then, as it was not in the interests of cricket that one man should stay in for ever.

Mr. BRODRICK, who was intercepted by an interviewer on his return to Peper Harow after a Primrose League meeting at Guildford, observed that the rôle of prophet carried with

it serious responsibilities. But without indiscretion he might safely predict that Lord CURZON on his return to England would not resume the Viceroyalty of India as long as Lord MINTO retained that important post. Mounting a three-legged stool, and assuming a distinctly Delphic attitude, Mr. BRODRICK then chanted the following oracle:—

If I stand for Guildford again and win,
The Liberal candidate won't get in;
If I stand again, and suffer defeat,
The Liberal Party will win the seat.

REMARKABLE EFFECT OF THE ECLIPSE ON A KENT CRICKETER.—During the darkest period Mr. A. P. DAY thought he was ALBERT KNIGHT.

THE PERSONAL NOTE.

[The 30th of August was rendered remarkable by the announcement, in the morning papers, of the success of the Peace Conference and of the ratification of the new treaty of alliance between England and Japan; by a partial, and altogether invisible, eclipse of the sun; and by a temperature worthy of the latter end of October.]

To-day is wrought of right historic stuff.

The Heaven on high, the Earth that spins below it,
Teem with phenomena sublime enough
To be the making of a minor poet.

Never, I fancy, has the *Mail* divulged
News that could so electrify the nations;
Never, in my belief, so largely bulged
With swelling pride of proved anticipations.

The Sun, eclipsed behind the usual cloud
(So faith must e'en dispense with sight, and chance it),
Further assumes a temporary shroud
Caused by the Moon's obtrusive bulk in transit.

Not so its counterfeit, the Rising Sun,
That unclipsed incarnadines the banners
Of those who taught the world how wars are won,
And set the mode to-day in civil manners.

One hand the Victor stretches out to show
How to his pledged ally he grows more partial;
With one (politely waved) he lets the foe
Secure a first success—not strictly martial.

Magnanimous in council as in fight,
He renders half the spoil and all the ransom,
And, for a Pagan, struggling toward the light,
His conduct strikes me as extremely handsome.

Peace is accomplished! "TEDDY" (his the fame)
Feels in his breast a not unnatural joy stir;
And through the azure Bay which bears its name
A strange elation chokes the astonished Oyster.

You'd think there could not breathe, in human form,
One creature so abominably selfish
Whose heart this hour is not at least as warm
As the interior of a torpid shell-fish;

Yet such am I. A chill invades my chest,
For, on this so-called summer day of August,
Rude Boreas, whistling through my airy vest,
Worries my vitals with his beastly raw gust.

Belfries may rock about with ringing bells,
And glad historians paint the peoples' annals
Purple, or pink;—*my* fancy rather dwells
On the immediate use of jäger flannels.

Let others order olive-twigs to-day
To mark the close of yonder deadly duel;—
Give *me* a pinewood log; give *me*, I say,
Something of service in the way of fuel!

With song and laughter let the City peal,
And bounding Bulls wear fillets on their forehead;—
I am no friend of Russia, yet I feel
More like a Bear afflicted with a sore head.

Nay, gentle jobber, bid me not to sing;
I have no heart to be a gaudy hummer;
I go in sable furs, a blighted thing,
Mourning the premature demise of summer! O. S.

A PROFESSIONAL MATINÉE.

THE troupe of mimes and singers that a certain eccentric Prince always maintained at his Court was one morning rehearsing on the lawn in front of the Palace. Near the centre stood the *prima donna*, arrayed in the garb of old Greece, and around her at a little distance circled the chorus, picturesquely broken up into groups of charming figures. The musicians had ranged themselves against the retaining wall of the terrace above; upon the balustrade whereof, with his legs dangling over the instruments of music, sat the Chief of the Jesters, who in virtue of his office was not only a great antiquarian and philosopher, but also the skilled director of all state entertainments.

They had come to the crucial passage in the work before them. Softer and slower grew the song of the *prima donna*, and lower and lower she bent, until at length she sang upon her knees; and finally, as the last sobs of the accompanying violins died away, she fell prone upon the grass and buried her face in a pair of extremely shapely arms. The chorus gathered round, terror-stricken; there was silence for a few bars, broken only by the Chief of the Jesters counting the time. Then a timid note or two escaped from the flutes, like the first twittering of birds at daybreak; presently the young lady on the ground slowly recovered and began to rub her eyes, and the stringed instruments meanwhile slipped pleasantly into the prelude that was to lead up to the final harmonious outburst. What it all meant is, fortunately, not material to this present history.

The *prima donna* was coming round gracefully, and both the eyes and the ears of the Chief of the Jesters were fully occupied with his task of superintendence, when somebody clapped him on the shoulder from behind so unexpectedly that he let the prompt-book fall with a crash on the top of the orchestra. The music came to a ragged finish. The chorus, just starting their joyous *finale*, gradually—to use their own figurative language—dried up; and the *prima donna*, who had been acting very well, and knew it, rose from the grass and petulantly dusted her purple chiton.

"You are all wasting your time, my friends," said the Prince; for it was he whose sudden appearance had thrown everybody at sixes and sevens.

The Chief of the Jesters slewed his legs round, and alighted on the terrace with such ceremony as he could muster. Courtier as he was, he had difficulty in concealing his annoyance.

"We are spending our time, as ever, in your Highness's service," he said gravely.

The Prince, who knew how to make allowance for the touchiness of the artistic temperament, graciously ignored the insinuation.

"I have come to the conclusion," he continued—and the Prince's conclusions had the force of law in that country as soon as he arrived at them—"I have come to the conclusion that art is a mistake. Nay, more, it is an impertinence. As I walked abroad at dawn this morning, the grand concert of Nature, at which I assisted in solitude, touched me with emotions such as you are powerless to inspire. By the side of her harmony I felt how contemptible are your cunning patterns of sound, your studied poses, your whole armoury of artifice. As artists, I have decided to abolish you. You will come along with me, the whole pack of you, and learn from Nature to despair."

There was nothing for it but to obey, at all events, the first part of this command. The Prince led the way to a beautiful dell, not half a mile off, known as the Valley by the Sea, which, although within the Palace demesne, had been left wild, in delightful contrast to the carefully tended gardens where the rehearsal had taken place; and making the company sit down on the slopes thereof, like an audience sitting round an



IN THE BALTIC.

FIRST BRITISH TAR (to SECOND DITTO). "‘ERE, MATE, LET’S BREAK THE ICE. WOT’S THE GERMAN FOR ‘ENTENTE’?"





A QUESTION OF PROPORTION.

Colonel Peppercorn (who is touring in France with a hired chauffeur and car, which has broken down). "CONFOUND IT ALL, YOU SAY IT'S NOTHING! THEN WHY DON'T YOU REPAIR IT?"

Alphonse Legros. "MAIS, MONSIEUR, PAS POSSIBLE, HE BREAK BELOW! I CANNOT ARRIVE THERE! HE IS ONLY QUINZE CENTIMÈTRES FROM ZE GROUND; BUT ME—VOILÀ—I HAVE ONE MÈTRE ROUND ZE CHEST!"

amphitheatre, he bade them attend to the grand concert of Nature, which he assured them was still going on there.

"The lighting," added the Prince, condescending to a technical expression, "is not so perfectly lovely now as when I was here at daybreak; but you must imagine all *that*."

The Chief of the Jesters raised his eyebrows slightly and coughed, but he said nothing.

The grand concert of Nature was soothing, and even soporific. Each little wave of the summer sea, as it played over the shingle on the beach below, sent up a sound like a long-drawn sigh of infinite happiness; as an accompaniment to this rhythmic lullaby there was the sustained, noon-tide drone of multitudinous insects underneath the trees; and many and various birds performed sweet but uncorrelated fantasias amongst the branches.

"How long is this farce going on?" whispered the *prima donna* to the Chief of the Jesters, when they had been sitting thus about the space of two hours.

"Your classification, my dear, of the different forms of dramatic entertainment—" began the philosopher, but the lady pinched his arm so viciously that his sarcasm subsided into a most unphilosophical exclamation.

"Mere impatience," he apologised to the Prince, who had turned round angrily. "Nature develops her theme but slowly, methinks."

"There will be a change of key about nightfall," said his Highness.

The company looked at one another with blank faces, and the *prima donna*, laying her head against the shoulder of the Chief of the Jesters, shamelessly went to sleep.

But Nature herself, after all, came to their rescue. It grew dark and still; her orchestra, as the Prince would have said, was performing one of those piano passages that presage a coming storm. And when the thunder-clouds burst and the rain fell in torrents, though he pretended to be enraptured with the sound of both, the Prince could not but be moved to pity by the frightened faces and the drenched draperies of the chorus girls, and with a show of reluctance he gave the signal to return to the Palace.

"A fine work," observed the Chief of the Jesters to the Prince as they walked home, dripping, "but it wants a lot of cutting. By the way, has it ever struck your Highness that there is one glory of the Sun and another glory of the Moon? I should have thought that the Moon might probably have struck your Highness. I speak metaphorically, of course."

"Peace!" said the Prince, who was but mad north-north-west, "I restore you your reflected glories."

WANTED, good all-round Man; hand-sewn. Apply —, Boot-maker.—Advt. in "Nottingham Daily Guardian." This throws a new light on the last word of the passage—"in fair round belly, with good capon lined."

"A LITTLE learning is a dangerous thing"—to point out in others.

"The young Protestant lady who thought she detected a mistake on a tombstone in a Catholic cemetery will know better in future. 'Requiescat in pace' is the proper rendering of this Latin phrase. The letter 'n' retained in the usual 'requiescat' is more euphonious and pleasant to the ear in rendering the mass for the dead."—*The Times of North Bay, Ontario.*

THE PERILS OF THE ROAD.

(A Modern Story of Adventure.)

THE two motorists were men who had travelled much, and in strange places. They had the unassuming manners of those who have encountered dangers in many different forms. Yet SPARKER's hand shook on the steering wheel, and GEARY's usual quiet smile had deserted his lips. Their nervousness will be understood when it is mentioned that they were crossing one of the loneliest moors in Northumberland, a locality where, as late as the twentieth century, wolves roamed at large, and highwaymen robbed His Majesty's mail.

Nor can it be said that the car—a new 12 h.p. *Débâcle*—was acting up to the reputation which the local agent had given it. Down hill, indeed, it moved splendidly, but the slightest ascent seemed at once to cool its enthusiasm and to heat its engines. Just now it was toiling painfully up a long hill, and protesting uneasily against SPARKER's efforts "to make her," as he phrased it, "take it on the second." "First," she seemed to whirr in reply, "is good enough for me."

Suddenly GEARY gripped his comrade's arm. "Hark, what was that?" he said. "Listen, man, listen."

"I suppose it's something in the car," SPARKER replied, wearily. "She's made so many queer noises to-night that one more don't signify."

"It isn't the car this time," replied the other.

The sound was repeated. It was a sound unmistakable to those who have ever read books of adventure; it was the long-drawn howl of a wolf.

Twelve horses would have been spurred by terror to a quicker pace. The twelve which the *Débâcle* was advertised to represent continued exasperatingly calm; the car only moaned as SPARKER, for the fifth time, ground in the second gear, and in a few yards she showed every sign of stopping altogether. The situation was a desperate one; the crest of the hill, by an illusion common under such circumstances, seemed to recede further and further away. The howlings grew nearer and nearer.

Presently it was possible to distinguish through the darkness the grey gaunt forms of the wolves. On they came, with their noses to the ground, following, with what was evidently a pleasant uncertainty, the novel scent of the petrol. The leader of the pack, especially gaunt and grey, cantered doggedly some few yards ahead of the rest. His gleaming fangs and protruded tongue could, as is customary under such circumstances, be clearly seen.

"This is worse than any police trap,"

muttered GEARY, as he glanced behind. "I wonder if they are merely taking our number."

"I don't think they can say we are exceeding the limit," was SPARKER's bitter reply.

A fortunate occurrence gave the pursued a temporary advantage. Some of the wolves, who could now sight their quarry, were evidently a little surprised to discover the kind of vehicle they were pursuing. It was not a sleigh, or at least not a sleigh like any they had ever seen. And at this juncture a series of deafening explosions in the exhaust, due probably to one of the cylinders missing, added to their astonishment. They seemed to suspect firearms, a very pardonable misconception on their part, and the car gained at least twenty yards. Then the wolves took up the trail again.

"Let's try the horn," suggested SPARKER, who was full of resource, and he blew some resonant blasts upon it. "That ought to puzzle them."

This expedient had only a momentary success. The wolves hesitated, and then apparently assigned this new sound to some animal who was drawing the car. They followed with renewed ardour, licking their lips greedily.

"What is generally done now," said SPARKER, "is, if I remember right, to cut adrift and sacrifice one of the horses."

"Then," said GEARY, "we must try them with our spare outer cover. Luckily it is only a re-vulcanised one."

He turned, and leaning over into the *tonneau*, dragged out the huge india-rubber tyre in question. Then standing up, he flung it with a shout to the pack of wolves. They struggled with snappings and yelpings for this delicacy, and in a few seconds it was completely devoured. But the device had gained time; and, more than that, it had an unlooked-for effect upon the wolves themselves. There were growls which sounded like disappointment, while in the manner of those who had enjoyed more than their fair share of the repast some discomfort might be detected, as well as a distinct loss of enthusiasm. They seemed to be holding an informal discussion together, and the pursuit slackened.

"Is there anything else we can sacrifice?" asked SPARKER, as he coaxed the reluctant *Débâcle* up the hill.

"Only a Parsons chain," GEARY answered gloomily, "and they are scarcely likely to relish that. Still we are very near the top, and that tyre seems to have taken the edge off their appetites."

It was as he said. The wolves, apparently concluding that the article just consumed might be taken as a sample of the eatables which the enterprise had to offer, had stopped altogether and were now almost out of sight. Hope

rose in the hearts of the travellers, when suddenly a new and scarcely less alarming development occurred. In the middle of the road appeared, barring their advance, a masked man who leaped lightly from a three-speed bicycle.

"Gentlemen," he cried with a courteous sweep of his hard black hat, "I must ask you to stand and deliver." At the same time he covered the travellers with a revolver.

SPARKER was as usual equal to the emergency. He pressed the footbrake, and slowed the car down. "We are unarmed," he replied quietly, "and can make no resistance. If you go round to the back of the car you will find a petrol tin full of gold in the *tonneau*. Help yourself and don't mind us."

The highwayman, who seemed to be of a somewhat confiding disposition, uttered a brief expression of thanks for the information, and passed in the direction indicated. He could be heard groping about busily at the back of the car.

"There is no gold here," he cried at length. "I trust you are not playing me false, gentlemen." And he tapped his weapon significantly.

GEARY was about to make some reply, when SPARKER checked him with a sudden thrust of the elbow. "What! No gold there!" he said with an excellent assumption of surprise. "Are you certain? Then," and he sighed, "it is as I feared. The tin has been bumped out by the jolting of the car. We must certainly turn back and look for it in the road. I thought I heard something behind us, didn't you, GEARY?"

"Indeed I did," GEARY corroborated earnestly.

"Do you care to accompany us in our search?" inquired SPARKER of the brigand.

The man laughed cunningly. "I will spare you any trouble in the matter," he said. "It shall lie with me to remedy your carelessness. Now you shall give me your word of honour as gentlemen, to wait here, while I ride back along the road. As soon as you hear me shout you may continue your journey. Have I your promise? I know that your promise will be of more avail than any threats."

SPARKER lighted a cigarette. "You have our promise," he said as he blew out the match. "As soon as we hear you shout," he repeated with deliberation.

The highwayman pedalled into the darkness, whistling a popular tune, while the motorists awaited the issue with interest. In a few moments there were sounds of frenzied firing, followed by an unmistakable shout. As he heard it SPARKER let in the clutch with a deep sigh of relief. "Now we can be

off with a clear conscience," he said. "Tuck the rug round you, GEARY. She seems to be pulling better."

As they dropped down the hill GEARY meditated silently. "I'm afraid," he said, "our friend will be a little disappointed; though," he added more cheerfully, "the wolves will be pleased."

"And anyhow," replied SPARKER, who added the study of philosophy to his other attainments, "the greatest happiness of the greatest number is secured."

PROBLEMS AND SURPRISES.

(With acknowledgments to the "Saturday Westminster.")

A.—We offer a prize of half-a-crown for the best definition of vegetarianism in the style of SHAKESPEARE. Contributions must contain all the letters of the alphabet, no adjectives, and not less than 500 words.

B.—We offer a prize of 10s. and 6d. for the best rendering in Volapukeranto of the following epigram by the Russian poet TURNITOFF, supposed to be chanted by a Moujik nurse to her charge:—

Cumout ofthi gard enmordi,
Forthi nytis growi nold,
O therwi zyool katchi kofski,
Anper hapshoor dethic old.

REPORT ON PREVIOUS PROBLEMS.

A.—Translation into Greek Corybantic.

The competition for a prize of one guinea for the best rendering into Greek Corybantic of SOUTHEY's poem, *The Cataract of Lodore*, has produced admirable results. The Examiners have received at least forty-nine versions of the highest quality, any one of which might well have been awarded a prize. The difficulty of deciding between these has been very great, because, in spite of the rules, not one of them was type-written. The guinea goes to HOMER B. BLUG, 116, 23rd Street West, Troy, Ind., U.S.A., for the following:—

πολλα δ' αὐατα
κάγωτα
πάραντά τε
δοχμά τ'
ἦλθεν.

This seems to reflect the spirit of the original without being slavishly literal.

B.—Andalusian Triplets.

We offered one pound sterling for the best Andalusian Triplets on "Fame." Many competitors apparently confused the form with those of the Patagonian Ballade à Double Refrain and the Sicilian Vespers Triolet. In the first of these the accepted masters use only one rhyme throughout, though VILLON and Mr. HENLEY favoured a blank-verse variety; and in the second it is usual to repeat



Irate Angler (sneaking tramp). "WHY CAN'T YOU LOOK AFTER YOUR BEAST OF A DOG? IT'S BEEN AND EATEN ALL MY LUNCH."

Tramp (hungrily). "WHAT, ALL THE LOT, MISTER! WELL, HE SHOULDN'T 'AVE DONE THAT IF I COULD 'AVE 'ELPED IT!"

the refrain four times in all. The prize goes to PITCHFORK, who is asked to send name and address.

FAME.

Tell me, is Fame
A poor, lame
Dame?

Some answer "Yea,"
Others say
"Nay."

And, by my light,
"Yea" seems quite
Right.

For Fame is what
I have not
Got,

Though verse to me
Is A B
C.

Another Insult to Ireland.

MUCH indignation has been caused in the Sister Isle by the publication of statistics concerning the eclipse, which show clearly that, while such places as Edinburgh escaped with a maximum obscurity of 72.5 per cent., no less than 80 per cent. of the solar disc was blotted out as observed from Dublin. It is understood that at the opening of the next session searching questions will be put to Mr. LONG, with the object of calling attention to the manner in which Irish interests are neglected.

NATURE STUDIES.

THE SWAN.

To be born a swan and to live on the Thames would appear to be a consummation of all hopes and ambitions that a vagrant piece of vital essence may be supposed to have cherished in its pre-natal state. Is there any other being that exemplifies to the same degree the perfection of graceful beauty and the high-water mark of elegant sleekness and indolent scorn? Who would not care to be admired for his shape and respected for his air? There may be drawbacks. I have dined with the Worshipful Company of Vintners—may the Fates grant them a permanence of prosperity and a constant succession of convivial feasts!—and I remember that swan (or it may have been cygnet) formed an item in the menu. From this I inferred that one of my Thames friends had met with a violent death; but the incident is, I doubt not, exceptional. I have also seen a swan on land, and I own that his beauty suffered an earth-change greatly to his disadvantage. He was an absurd and overweighted waddler instead of a graceful glider, but it was stress of food in the winter time that had driven him on to the lawn on which I saw him monstrously parading, and, on this plea, he may be excused. As a rule, however, he is, as I have said, beautiful; and he lives easily on the weeds that he finds for himself in the river and on the bread and cake and biscuits supplied to him by picnic parties or the juvenile families of riparian proprietors.

The swan I know best is the jealous father and guardian of a little fleet of five cygnets, whom, with their mother, he conveys up and down one of the reaches of the Thames. A little higher up the river there may be found another pair of swans, whose family numbers only two, and between these two families or flocks exists a state of hideous enmity which not even President ROOSEVELT could avail to mitigate. Whenever the two males set eyes on one another, even at a distance of several hundred yards, the trouble incontinently begins. Up go the wings of my swan like two battle standards, he curves his neck into a loop, lays his fierce bill upon his breast, and with furious strokes forces himself through the agitated water. The enemy has gone through a similar pantomime, and so they speed against one another. My heart beats; all my being is in suspense for the crash of the conflict. Yet (I confess it with regret) I have never seen battle actually joined. When they arrive within striking distance each lays his head away from the other and directs his course at a tangent that sets them apart. Then they wheel round and again and again repeat the futile demonstration, their wives meanwhile paddling about at a discreet distance with their piteous and piping offspring. But woe betide the family that happens for a time to be without its male protector! The foe seizes his opportunity. With incredible speed and violence, appearing suddenly, as from a trap-door in the Thames, he dashes in amongst the children of his absent rival, plunges upon them, seizes them by the neck, and treads them deep under the water, whence they emerge, bleating and terror-stricken, a long distance away.

There is, indeed, about swans an unappeasable fierceness which is strange in a bird so graceful and so white. Every morning my swan brings his wife and his dark-grey, fluffy brood to the edge of my raft, and every day the children give him tribute of bread. The little ones accept it with meekness, the parents with hissing and hatred. No courtesies can mollify them. They swallow the crumbs eagerly, but if a chubby and incautious foot strays too near the edge of the raft it is dabbed and bruised by a prompt stroke from the bill of the passionate and greedy bird. Not even the venerable age and complete deafness of the spaniel have availed to save him from attack. Only yesterday he was drinking with his head hung over the edge of the raft when he received

a rap that sent him flying in an astonished confusion to the land. The anger of the swan and the terror of the spaniel made the most diverting contrast I have witnessed for many a long day; and when the swan sailed off to rejoin his family he had in his air an added scorn for all four-legged creatures as well as for those who, owning two legs, possessed no feathers and very short necks.

AN IDYLL OF THE CRICKET FIELD.

So all a summer's day the village green
Of Astolat-cum-Thurnaby was loud
With rainbow-blaze of blazers, and the cries
Of them that bowled the ball, and them that smote,
And them that chased it to the bounds of space,
Like errant knights that follow, follow the Gleam;
And swish of wielded willow winnowing air,
And thwack of leaping leather dealing doom,
And quick death-ruckle of the stricken stumps,
As Astolat and Cumnor, man by man,
Shin-guarded, rubber-knuckled, spikelet-shod,
Strode to the wicket, slogged, and, slogging, past.
And now, for now the languorous afternoon
Swooned in the arms of evening, and the sun
Sloped slowly home, the issue of the day
Hung in the balance and the balance swayed.

For EDWIN ALLEN, coachman at the Hall,
Who drove a pair of greys for General JONES,
But could not drive a cricket-ball for nuts,
The last man in (they wanted one to tie,
And two to win), he over-keen to win,
Had skied Sir LANCELOT of the Moated Grange,
Swift-swiping as he caught him on the hop.

Then, for a voice shrilled "Yours" across the field,
I, standing lost in dreams at cover-point—
For often would I lose myself in dreams,
A shadow in a world of shadows, fain
To gather wool upon the hills of sleep—
Dreams of fair women, fairer than the day,
Sweet ALICE of the Mill, SEMIRAMIS,
And CLEOPATRA, and a baker's dozen
Of early loves, with downward-dropping eyes,
Who came into the garden after dark
What time the old grey owl said "Woo, to woo,"
And the horse-chestnut cleared his throat and sang
"O Moon!"—but there I woke, and, waking, swept
The heavens above me with an eye as blue,
And marked, or thought I marked, perhaps I marked,
Or partly marked, the orbit of the sphere,
And gauged the angle of its incidence,
And waved wild hands, and opened wide my mouth,
And stood as one that supplicates the gods.

And, even as thus I stood, from crease to crease,
Fleet-footed as the dawn upon the hills,
Sprinting, the batsmen ran, and counted "One,"
Nor paused to count, since one and one make two.

But all the daisy-dappled sward was sown
With gazers, for a thousand faces watched,
Eager, intent, two thousand eyes save one—
Two eyes a face, but one had lost an eye,
A grey-haired thrall who vended almond-rock
And gold-peeled sourness of the sunny South,
The battered ruin of a strenuous youth;
For once he gazed, and once too often gazed,
Orb upon orb, a penny for the peep,
Athwart a monstrous lens that magnified
The spots upon the sun, which none may see
Or, seeing, see but veiled; till Nature, wroth
To have her privy blemishes displayed
To gaping yokels at a country fair,



AMBIGUOUS.

Mother (to children, who have been teasing goat). "CHILDREN! CHILDREN!! STOP THAT NOISE! YOUR FATHER IS VERY COETHERED TO-DAY—AND YOU REALLY MUST NOT WORRY THE POOR BRUTE!"

Shrieked, and saw red, and ramped; the high sun flamed
With sudden heat, and, arrowing through the tube
His gathered rays, cancelled a sense misused.

And that which sprang into the boundless blue
Turned again earthward, and, as when a hawk
Stoops, and the void is full of fear, so fear
And hope made silence, and the ball fell on.
And every breath was held in solemn pause,
And every heart stopped beating in suspense,
Nor pulsed the rhythmic pulse of human life,
The systole-diastole of Time and Fate,
Whereto the star-dust dances, and the worlds
Whirl; and the scorer's pencil hung in air.
Not so it hung, the ball, but fell and fell
And fell; I clutched and caught it—on my toe.

As breaks the sudden ice-piled barrier-gate
When Spring unchains the Yukon, and the ice
Breaks with a roar, and leaps to meet the sea,
So brake the dam of execration, so
Leapt the loud laughter from a thousand throats;
And immemorial elms that fenced the field
Flung forth a rout of rooks, that, shrieking, fled
From nests that rocked and toppled at the cry
Of "Butterfingers" pealing to the stars.

School Inspector. Now, my boy, what is a vacuum?

Smart Infant. Please, Sir, it's a place with no air in it, which makes it very hot in summer. The Pope lives there.

SEASONABLE QUESTIONS.

In case the supply of silly season posers is giving out, *Mr. Punch* offers the following selection to enterprising editors:—

Are women sufficiently manly?
Ought mixed-dining to be allowed?
Do babies like walnuts?
Ought the Sea-Serpent to wear a sun-bonnet?
Are cricketers agnostics?
Ought engagements to be made public?
Are we growing stouter?
Do women appreciate kindness?
Should life be allowed?
Ought the sun to be eclipsed?
Is music musical?

In the *Isle of Man Daily Times* of August 25, under the heading "FIXTURES OF MANY EVENTS," appeared the following announcement:—"August 30. Eclipse of the Sun." It sounds rather like a local performance of one of Mr. HALL CAINE'S masterpieces.

From a Lakeside newspaper:—

"... the shores of the local lakes teem with the residences of many of the principal people of Lancashire and Yorkshire, and though the actual rateable value of the estates may not be startling, the gross personality (*sic*) of the people who live there would go a long way to wiping off the National Debt."



Fisherman (more in sorrow than in anger, to Manole, who has been bumping into every craft for the last five minutes). "You know, you ought to be in some 'ome!'"

A PLEA FOR THE DOVE.

"A dove, reported to be 45 years of age, belonging to Mrs. SINCLAIR, of Cirencester, has just won a first prize in the local fur and feather show. The bird was in good feather, and bore its weight of years well."—*Evening Standard*, August 28, 1905.]

TEACHERS were wont, until a recent date, To bid their youthful charges emulate The habits—if they really wished to thrive—

Of the industrious workers of the hive.

('Twas Doctor WATTS, most people will agree, Who started out to boom the busy bee; Lord AVEBURY cracked him up in recent days, And MAETERLINCK waxed lyric in his praise.)

And yet the bee, to whom a copious crowd Of sages have consistently kow-towed, Though his good qualities can't be denied,

Is not in ev'ry sphere the safest guide.

He is industrious, that we freely grant; But if it comes to that, so is the ant, The beaver, and that unobtrusive soul, The real harbinger of tubes—the mole.

His style of architecture freedom lacks; He uses only one material—wax;

His voice—no matter what he feels or does—

Is limited to one eternal buzz.

He can't eliminate his unemployed; He takes to suicide when he's annoyed; His polity reveals one vital flaw— He's governed by an anti-Salic law.

Hence, if the rising human generation Must imitate the animal creation, Let us at least for our ensample choose A creature of less disputable views.

I, for my part, shall never cease to shove The claims to admiration of the dove, Who with a gentle and engaging mien Combines an intellect alert and keen.

To prove his studious habits, only go And view our great Museum portico: Or, if you doubt his love of legal talk, Just note how he infests the King's Bench Walk.

The dove, moreover, in our hour of need Will fetch and carry for us at a speed Unchecked by constables, and passing far The paltry limit of the motor-car.

The dove again, whether upon the wing Or off it, never has been known to sting. His voice is soft, his habits are not flighty, Although he was beloved by APHRODITE.

The span of life in bees is very brief, They quickly fall into the yellow leaf; But doves, the Press assures me, can contrive

To keep their beauty up to forty-five.

Living, they typify domestic bliss, And afterwards excel the bee in this, That when the hour has struck for them to die

They make a highly palatable pie.

On all these grounds, and surely they are lots,

I can't endorse the eulogies of WATTS, Or of Lord AVEBURY, nor do I think I am obliged to vote for MAETERLINCK.

Before the bee I gladly doff my cap; He is a sober and hardworking chap; But when it comes to friendship or to love,

I plump emphatically for the dove.

More Commercial Candour.

The Patent "STICKIN" Hair Pin. Just out.

Advice (reprinted from the Company's notice boards) to those about to travel by a certain railway that shall be nameless:—

"BEWARE OF THE TRAINS."

PEACE—AND AFTER ?



Six-year-old. "I SAY, GRANNIE, I THINK YOU'D BETTER STOP MAKING MY TROUSERS. LOTS O' TIMES TO-DAY I WASN'T SURE WHETHER I WAS GOIN' TEE SCHOOL OR COMIN' 'OME."

AT ANCHOR.

EXTRACT FROM THE RECESS DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.

Kyles of Bute; R.Y.S. "Capercailzie;" Monday.—Steaming up the Kyles of Bute came upon a weird spectacle. Never a fairer August day shone o'er land and sea. Light clouds floated lazily over the hills on either side, momentarily changing patches of brilliant green into solemn shade. A sea-gull flew across, its white wings glinting like a flock of snow against the shadowed hill; beyond the heather, patches of purple; "the blue sky over all like God's great pity."

Far ahead loomed what looked like a spectral fleet. Battleships evidently. As the *Capercailzie*, undaunted, flew nearer, caught sight of the fighting tops, gunless, unmanned. Nearer still, and there were the big guns frowning defiance. But no sentry at his post, no blue-jackets moving about, no epauletted officers on the bridge. Six battleships in all, anchored in line. Like "the party in the parlour, all silent and all—" Well, to put it literally, condemned.

Our Admiral, fellow-passenger on the yacht, told us all about it. He had personal acquaintance with most of these grimly-grey ghosts of naval power. They formed a squadron of that con-

siderable proportion of the British Fleet which, their inefficiency being clear to JACK FISHER's piercing eye, were written off the *Navy List* by his relentless hand. Two years ago, at furthest, they were in commission, nominally a portion of the Fleet that, according to PRINCE ARTHUR, makes Cumbrae and the adjacent islands of Great Britain and Ireland invulnerable to invasion. To-day they lie in the peaceful obscurity of a Scotch Loch.

"Their part in all the pomp that fills
The circuit of the summer hills
Is that their—"

work is done. As we slowly steam past, the Admiral tells us their names and something of their history. Here are the *Collingwood* and the *Colossus*, built in 1882; each of 10,000 tons; cost between them something over a million sterling: already out of date; going at the price of scrap iron.

Here is the *Dreadnought*, an elder sister, built in 1875. A year earlier the *Captain* turned turtle at sea, carrying her hapless crew to the depths below. It was felt that something supreme, decisive, must be done to re-establish supremacy of British Navy. Committee of experts appointed, under presidency of Lord DUFFERIN. Result was the *Dreadnought*, 10,820 tonnage, 6,500 horse-power, warranted to exceed

a speed of 13 knots. This grimy-looking hulk, with its top-masts gone, its portholes toothless gums, is what is left of the *Dreadnought*, just thirty years ago pride of the ocean, bulwark of British Navy.

Astern of her is another battleship whose name recalls a later tragedy in navy annals. It is the *Sans Pareil*, first-class battleship, built in 1887 on the very lines of the *Victoria*, which only a few years ago sank with Admiral TRYON and nearly all his officers and crew aboard.

Ahead the *Iron Duke*, with portholes for 14 guns, has her story to tell. Built in 1872 she, three years later, in the friskiness of youth, steering out of Dublin Bay, ran into the *Vanguard* and successfully sank her. For full thirty years the *Vanguard* has slept in the silence of the Irish Channel. Here at length her assailant and destroyer, in the decrepitude of age, comes to final anchorage in the Kyles of Bute.

By exception the *Alexandra*, needy knife-grinder of the squadron, has no story to tell—at least none of disaster to herself or sisters. She was Admiral HORNBY's flag-ship in the Mediterranean during the exciting time when DIZZY, being Premier, pursued a spirited foreign policy. It was about the time (1877) when the House of Commons was startled

by message reaching the Treasury Bench that the Russians were at the gates of Constantinople. It came from Sir HENRY LAYARD, Ambassador at the Porte, and before the agitated sitting closed was proved to be baseless.

In pursuance of spirited foreign policy the *Alexandra* was ordered to pass through the Dardanelles. As she was getting up steam for the expedition a Turkish Pacha arrived with a protest. By solemn treaty the Dardanelles were closed against all but Turkish ships.

"You protest?" said the Admiral. "Very sorry, but you see my orders are to proceed to Constantinople. The only way there is through the Dardanelles, so I am going on."

But the *Alexandra* will go no more a-sailing in the Dardanelles or elsewhere. Here she lies at anchor, part of a funeral procession of battleships temporarily halted on the way to the scrap heap. Long ago LONGFELLOW

"... read in some old marvellous tale,
Some legend strange and vague,
That a midnight host of spectres pale
Besieged the walls of Prague."

That was fancy. Here be facts not less strange in these spectres of battleships, peacefully at anchor amid the quietness and beauty of the Kyles of Bute.

A COMPLAINT OF KIND ENQUIRIES.

SUMMER is pretty near over,
Watering-places are thronged,
Trippers are living in clover,
I alone feel myself wronged.
Painfully feel my position,
Daily and hourly beset,
Questioned with vain repetition,—
"Been for your holiday yet?"

Don't talk to me about trouble,
Luggage that wanders astray,
Rooms with their rents screwed to
double,
Children that cry all the day,
Skies everlastingly clouded,
Trains that eternally crawl,
Sea-fronts impossibly crowded—
I could put up with them all!

I could put up with the niggers,
I could put up with the noise,
Bathers, and paddlers, and diggers,
Donkeys and similar joys;
What do such little things matter?
Let me but get out of town,
Coming back several pounds fatter,
Burnt a mahogany-brown!

No, I am tied to the City,
Tied to my wearisome task.
Yet from the stores of your pity
One little favour I ask;
Meekly I make the suggestion:
When in the street we have met,
Don't ask the imbecile question,
"Been for your holiday yet?"

CHARIVARIA.

A LADY writes to suggest that a public subscription be opened with the object of presenting Mr. ROOSEVELT with a painting of himself as "The Angel of Peace." We are afraid that our correspondent, for whose poetical idea we have the greatest admiration, forgets that the PRESIDENT wears *pince-nez*.

The *Noroe Vremya* deplores the conclusion of peace "now that the Russian army has become stronger than ever." It is an undoubted fact that the Russian army is always stronger in peace.

The KAISER is irrepressible. He has now designed a set of altar ornaments for the German Protestant Church in London. We trust that they will be in better taste than his designs in Morocco.

The crowds who follow the KING at Marienbad whenever he goes for a stroll continue to cause great inconvenience, and a proposal has been made that these admirers shall be compelled, anyhow, to walk in single file.

The directors of the Louvre are being urged to get rid of the many spurious works of art which have found their way into the galleries. It is pointed out that the clearance need not mean a financial loss to the institution, as such objects could easily be sold to wealthy Americans.

It now appears that the eclipse of the sun last week was due to the appearance of the *Blue Moon* at the Lyric, accompanied by a number of brilliant stars.

During the eclipse a number of the natives of Sfax banged violently on various utensils, and ultimately succeeded in scaring it away. By this prompt action an end was put to what was threatening to become a nuisance.

According to the *Daily Telegraph*, an epidemic of baldness has evidently broken out at Lowestoft. "Many ladies," says our contemporary, "have adopted the fashion of wearing lace scarves instead of hats, but many more wear no head-covering at all." The Simple Life again.

The Lansdowne Council School was struck last week by a ball of fire, but the Government intends to stick to the Education Bill.

Objection has been taken by a Conservative agent against the votes of passive resisters whose poor rates were paid "unknown to them," on the ground that they themselves paid no rates. This will press hardly on such as paid their own rates anonymously.

A remarkable instance of rejuvenation is reported. Now that the statement of JOHN VAUGHAN to the effect that he was a bugler at the battle of Waterloo has been proved to be a fabrication, the old gentleman has frankly acknowledged that he will not be a centenarian any longer.

We quite agree with the Magistrates who hold that there are too many assaults on the police, but we must say that the constables sometimes provoke such treatment. Last week, for instance, it transpired, in a charge brought against a man for this offence, that he was privately engaged in beating his wife when the constable interfered.

Crowds watched KUBELIK take a bath in the sea at Morecambe last week, but other foreign musicians deny that the famous violinist is an innovator.

Truth is of the opinion that the dis-favour into which sea-bathing has fallen is due to the increased size of the feet of what are known as "open-air girls." We believe it is an indisputable fact that when the members of a certain ladies' hockey club recently went paddling at a certain seaside resort an abnormally high tide ensued.

A petition will shortly be presented to the KING for the founding of a Royal Academy in South Africa. In one respect, we believe, the proposed institution will be an improvement on Burlington House, as it will admit black and white men as members.

The Persian Government is negotiating for the purchase of two gunboats, ostensibly with the idea of putting a stop to the operations of smugglers in the Persian Gulf, but actually, it is thought, to be in a position to snap its fingers at Russia.

Were it not that the following paragraph appears in an American newspaper, we should refuse to accept its accuracy. "For the United Verde Copper Mine in Arizona," says the *Chicago Record Herald*, "Senator WILLIAM CLARK, of Montana, was recently offered £5,000,000 by an English syndicate, but refused the offer, as he said he did not know what to do with the money."

Our English newspapers have no monopoly of exquisite taste. A Spanish journal has started a guessing competition among its readers as to the lady who will be chosen as a bride by King ALFONSO.

Mr. JOHN D. HAMLYN has returned from the forests of South-West Africa with a number of wild animals. We were sorry to see from a list that among them was a tiger bittern. Not badly, we hope.



"BANZAI!!"

A SUGGESTION WAS RECENTLY REFERRED TO IN MR. PUNCH'S "CHARIVARIA" THAT MEMBERS OF THE POLICE FORCE BECOMING PROFICIENT IN JIU-JITSU SHOULD FORTHWITH BE PERMITTED TO ABOUT SOMETHING NEAT IN THE WAY OF JAPANESE COSTUME. OUR ARTIST IS DISTINCTLY OF OPINION THAT THERE ARE POSSIBILITIES IN THE IDEA.

A FAIRY TALE.

THE pier is crowded. Overhead the sun shines with that genial disregard of Autumn that has made the fortunes of so many Burnmouth landladies; sea and sky are alike of a pale luminous blue, and to the south the Isle of Wight lies like a faint cloud upon the horizon. Because the place is famous as a health-resort the crowd includes a sufficiency of invalids in bath-chairs, and the general tone of the assembly is such as to suggest the cheerfulness of persons who have enjoyed "a somewhat better night." In the centre an excellent band is discoursing a programme of very popular music; and at the extreme end of the pier an intermittent diver pursues some mysterious avocation below water. In short, the scene presents what the *Daily Telegraph* will next morning describe as "an animated and summer-like aspect."

She—the heroine of this incident—is seated, when I first become conscious of her presence, upon one of the benches that edge the pier; her back to the sea. She is aged perhaps eighteen summers, slightly pretty in a common-place fashion, with a youthful anæmic-looking figure atrociously dressed, and a general appearance of answering to the name of FLOESIE. Closer, but furtive, inspection explains her as in all probability a lady-clerk on a holiday enforced by ill-health, and reveals the fact that she is at present entirely and happily absorbed in a perusal of *The Piebald Fairy Book*, a volume which she has selected from an unfrequented shelf in the local library. As having myself enjoyed the delights of this same book, "read to music,"

her choice seems to me to furnish an interesting sidelight upon her personality. I become vaguely curious.

"Now the Princess Myra" (as she reads she follows the words just audibly with her lips) "was so lovely that her like was never before seen, and the Princes of many lands sought her hand in marriage." I catch a rapturous sigh. "Going to be the sort of tale I love, this is," she says, unconsciously speaking half aloud. "Those must have been the times to live!"

On a lower staging of the pier, where is a perforated promenade for the use of steamboat passengers, amateur anglers

and the like, I now perceive a youth standing whistling softly to himself. He is about twenty years old, with an expressionless face and pale eyes. He wears a black short-tailed coat and a motor-cap. His occupation might be anything or nothing, and a friend who is with him addresses him, not without apparent justice, as ALBERT. He is staring vacantly over the sea towards the distant island, though it seems probable that he does not notice it, as, from something in the expression of his profile, I surmise

harmless eavesdropping proves more entertaining than my own literature, a superior and very hand-made collection of poems, wherein so far I have not got beyond the first, a lyric commencing:—

"Romance is fled, the world is drear,
We laugh at love, we face not fear."

Instead, I prefer to share the contents of *The Piebald Fairy Book*. "So when the day came on which election should be made of the suitors, the Princess clad herself in a gown of pure white all embroidered with silver apples, and on her head was a crown of gold, wondrous rich, so that from under it her hair fell round about her even unto her feet." Again the *sotto-voce* comment of the reader interrupts the text, this time with perhaps a shade of wistfulness. "My! Fancy being got up like that! Must ha' looked just lovely!" Half unconsciously I see her extend one arm along the back of the seat and endeavour to achieve as regal an effect as circumstances permit.

Perhaps a little ashamed I here endeavour to reconcentrate my attention upon the poet, but it is no use. Presently I again find myself an involuntary auditor of the adventures of the Princess Myra, who at this juncture appears to have just "taken the crown of gold from her head and cast it into the depths of the sea, saying, 'Whosoever shall recover me my crown from the waves, him only will I wed!'" "Well!" exclaims my companion, as before, "she had a nerve; no mistake!"—an opinion in which I am inclined to concur.

As we reach this conclusion, however, something happens. With the same unconscious dramatisation the girl is illustrating the scene by a slight flinging gesture of the

hand that rests upon the back of the seat, when there is a glitter, a flop, and the bangle on her wrist, a jewel of native Earl's Court manufacture, has slipped over her fingers into the water.

Glancing hastily over the side to mark its course, I observe the upturned countenance of the youth named ALBERT, close to whom the bangle fell. He is not looking at me. His gaze has been caught and held by that of the owner of the trinket. For the space of ten seconds they remained thus motionless, while the vexed flush on the cheeks of the Damsel changes and deepens. Then with an effort she averts her head, and



THE AMATEUR PUNTER.

BRING YOUR WATERPROOFS.

that change of scene, unwonted leisure, sunshine, and music are combining to effect that process in the youth which is known as "touching a chord."

Presently he speaks, partly to himself, partly to his friend. "Not 'arf a bad mornin' this: not 'arf . . . so sunny and wide. Umph! Wonder what made me think of that word . . . and yet it is somehow . . . kind of wide." He resumes his whistling abstractedly.

Meanwhile, immediately above his head, she is still reading. From my position at the other corner of the same seat, I continue to be able to follow every word. For some reason this

the Youth slowly turns away. From his expression I should hazard a guess that the chord has been completed.

The Damsel takes a deep breath.

"Well," she says, this time fully aloud, and to me, "that's gone, I suppose. No help for it!" She again endeavours to fix her attention upon the book, her lips moving as though in a resolute effort to overcome the memory of those ten seconds. "Then Prince Florizel pondered greatly (I wonder if he stared like him!) and betook himself

to a certain Monster of the sea, very fearful of approach, and besought the Monster to restore to him the crown of the Princess" (here I suspect her of skipping half a page absently). "So he brought the crown to the Princess." The book is still open in her hands, but her attention appears to wander. "Expect," I hear her murmur, "she was jolly well pleased. Guess I'd be pleased enough if—but we aren't in those days now, worse luck! I sha'n't ever see him again, most likely, and certainly not the bracelet."

During these reflections I observe that ALBERT, still appearing in a somewhat dream-like condition and strangely uncertain about the knees, has deserted his companion and wandered as far as the steps used by the intermittent diver, just as the latter, looking, with his great eyes and glistening armour, like some monstrous creature of the deep, appears above the surface and is hauled forth by his assistants. At the sight an idea seemed to strike the Youth. Out of the corner of my eye I see him hesitate for a moment; then, taking his courage in both hands, and nerved, perhaps, by a keen recollection of the Damsel, he approaches.

"Oh," he begins, in a squeaky and embarrassed voice, too high to be natural, "a lady 'as just dropped 'er bracelet overboard, and I was wonderin' if—" His voice sinks to a more confident key and becomes inaudible; money is displayed; and eventually the Monster re-descends; his assistants exchanging signals of derision as they turn the handles of the air-pump.

An interval, during which I feign an attention for my poet which I am far from feeling. The Damsel has allowed



THE EXTORTIONIST.

SUGGESTED COSTUME FOR AN UP-RIVER WAITER.

her book to fall into her lap and is gazing dreamily before her into vacancy. Presently however she rouses herself to a sense of duty; once again the adventures of the Princess are resumed, though with an obvious effort.

"So when the Princess saw Prince Florizel approaching with the crown of gold in his hand, she rose up from her ivory throne and cried with a loud voice—Well, I am obliged to you! How on earth did you ever get it?"

The change in her tone has made me look up hastily. ALBERT is standing before us, holding the lost bracelet. He giggles in some confusion.



ECHOES FROM THE HIGHLANDS.

JONES SAYS IT IS ABSOLUTELY UNTRUE THAT A TOTAL ECLIPSE OF THE SUN COULD NOT BE SEEN IN SCOTLAND!

"Well," he says, "'twasn't exactly on earth at all, so ter speak. Yer see I thought—" he falters, blushing. The Damsel adroitly makes room for him on the seat between us.

"Shame to keep you standing while you tell me," she observes graciously, "if that gentleman wouldn't mind movin' up a bit?"

With native courtesy I rise immediately and transfer myself to the next seat. I am afraid afterwards that this promptitude may have betrayed the fact that I was listening, but as a matter of

fact neither of them takes the smallest notice of me. By the time that I have realised this, ALBERT has seated himself, and, the music gliding suddenly into a waltz refrain, the subtle effect of 3-4 time causes them to lower their voices till only a confused murmur is audible. When the band ceases they appear to be on terms of intimacy.

"Yes," she says, "Jubilee Terrace, No. 5. You can't mistake the house; it's called Marina." Adding in an explanatory tone, "Spelt with an A, you know; not the material!"

"Then," ALBERT's voice responds, "if yer aunt wouldn't object, or you—" They exchange glances. Clearly I must not observe any more. For the last time I focus my attention determinedly upon my book. The concluding verse of the poem catches my eye; it is in much the same strain as the rest—

"Life's wings are furled; life's feet are lead;
The last wild words of love are said,
And from a world all cold and dead
Romance is fled!"

At this point I close the volume with a bang. Next moment there is a second gentle splash. The poems have followed the bracelet; but I shall not trouble the diver. ALBERT and the Damsel are walking up the pier side by side. It is time for lunch.

LIVE FISH.—Order direct; carriage paid; dressed for cooking.—Advt. in "Daily Mail."

There seems something rather gruesome in this idea of a live fish being put to the trouble of dressing for a function at which he is to be killed. Probably, however, it would be nothing formal—just a dinner jacket, or, in the case of kippers, what our neighbours call *un smoking*.

THE SIMIAN MUSE.

[The *New York Journal* suggests that Rhyme and Rhythm came from the baboon swaying on a wind-swept bough, and expressing his satisfaction, or his admiration for a lady monkey in the distance, in time to the rocking of the branch.]

Poet Laureate cantal :

YES, I knew it! when I'm singing,
I can hear the monkeys swinging
To and fro in beat and cadence on the prehistoric bough;
All the winged words I'm saying
Are in measure with the swaying
Of the primal Ape that's in us through the ages until now!

For the Poet's evolution
Now admits of this solution—
Erató's initial *opus* was composed among the trees;
Do not think the picture shocking—
As a simian, she was rocking
With a love-song as she held on with all fours against the breeze!

So the early quadrumana
Learnt the lyrical *arcana*
And the mysteries of rhythm and the niceties of rhyme,
While, *desipiens in loco*,
Each would throw his nut of coco
At his fellow or his lady-love by way of marking time.

I can feel a kind of jingle
Set my tympanum a-tingle,
Like my laureated ancestors all tossing in the air!
You might find, no doubt, a neater
Or more undulating metre,
But the old Ape-ollo, lord of song (not *doggrel*), yet is there!

When my Muse is getting dried up,
I shall mark myself "This side up!"
With trapeze I'll go a-swinging till my brain begins to act;
If the output still is halting,
I will do some airy vaulting,
Like a lemur, and my threatened ode will soon become a fact!

I shall hire a smart *Entellus*
And a *Cebus fatuellus*,
Or a chimpanzee to coach me on a *viré voce* plan;
Or with GARNER'S kind assistance
I will study (from a distance)
In the Zoo the blue baboon and learn how simian verses scan!
ZIG-ZAG.

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

FASCINATINGLY horrible is the narrative of life on board a slaver in a book entitled *The Black Barque*, written by T. JENKINS HAINS (DEAN AND SON). Among the awfully repulsive brutish characters crowded together on this vessel, and associated with her owners' inhuman and illegal trade ashore, there is but one man that seems to have retained any vestige of the dignity of humanity and to be above the level of the least savage of the crew which, at its worst, is filthily devilish. The Baron may be a trifle nice in his distinctions, but there are some situations in this account of the malpractices on board *The Gentle Hand* that fairly made him squirm, shut his eyes, and deliberate whether he should continue his perusal. That he determined to finish the book is clear testimony to the power of the author's descriptive art. There is only one ray of pure light among all this reeking foulness and densest darkness, illumined, as it is, from time to time, by lurid diabolical flashes of fire, and this is the presence of *Rose Allen*, daughter of the trader, *Yankee Dan*; and though we are encouraged to believe that salvation will come to more than one of these unprincipled scoundrels through her

agency, yet this promise is never fulfilled, nor is the girl allowed to be anything more than a mild relief to the surrounding devilry and carnage. Except for this artistic purpose the character of *Rose Allen* is utterly thrown away, and with her goes every chance of humanising romance. It is unpleasant reading, for there is little else recorded save slashing, swearing, quarrelling, biting and fighting. Pandemonium afloat is this story of life on board a slave-ship. Stirring, indeed, is the description of the pursuit of two escaping sailors by trained blood-hounds. The fugitives have their choice of plunging in the sea and risking death by sharks, or of being pinned by blood-hounds ashore and captured by those in command aboard the slave-ship. This incident is powerfully absorbing, as is also the weird description of the hurricane. But all these are but strong "situations," and the reader goes on hoping to find that by the writer's ingenuity he will come upon hero and heroine, *per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum*, united at last. But love is absent. The girl whom the Baron and every reader in turn will have mistaken for the heroine, released from her betrothal to a man she detested, turns to the narrator, and, "her eyes flooding scorn and contempt,"—the Baron thinks he understands what this is intended to convey—cries, "You, a sailor, let him die, and ran to save yourself?" "Only after he refused to go," answers the narrator, excusing himself; "I did all I could to persuade him." "She looked long and steadily at me. Then she turned and went slowly below, and I saw her no more on board." That is all. There ends whatever there was of romantic love, or passion, in the narrative. We have been interested in these horrors; and nothing comes of it all. There should have been a second part.

The Queen's Man (CONSTABLE), by ELEANOR C. PRICE, is the right book for a rainy day. It purports, says my Nautical Retainer, to be "A Romance of the Wars of the Roses," and appears, appositely enough, just at the moment when the conflict between Lancaster and York for the County Championship is still fresh in the public imagination. No previous knowledge of history is required, though perhaps a little subsequent reference to the chronicled facts might be useful to correct the author's account of the fascinating qualities of MARGARET of Anjou. All the right ingredients of romance are here—a feudal castle, a dark weir below its walls, secret passages and hanging arras, a Fellowship of Gentlemen Brigands, a crypt beneath the old chapel, a donjon, flapping banners, trusty servitors, sturdy English archers, a crafty Italian, a wicked dowager with a dagger, and a young and beauteous *châtelaine* with no fewer than four beaux to her string. The style is neither bad nor disturbingly good; there is no descriptive padding; no tedious delay over subtleties of analysis: nothing, in fact, to divert attention from a narrative replete with every form of moving adventure. Finally, all the awkward people are disposed of at appropriate junctures by different forms of death, pleasantly varied; leaving just the right ones that were wanted for a happy finish. Captious, indeed, would be the reader who asks for a more engaging romance than *The Queen's Man*.

CENTENARIAN CONFIDENCE.—"The total eclipse which is announced for the year 1999 is now awaited with redoubled expectancy by old and young alike."

Daily Express (italics by Mr. Punch).

